REMARKS

This communication is in response to the Office Action issued July 31, 2001. Claims 1-31 were pending in the application. The Applicant hereby adds claim 32. Thus, claims 1-32 are pending in the application. The Examiner rejected claims 1-31 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,654,957 to Koyama (Koyama).

Applicant-Initiated Amendments

The Applicant has replaced "Local Area Network interface" with "packet network interface" in claims 1 and 19 and corresponding instances in claims dependent thereon. These amendments were made to better define the invention. Support for these amendments is seen throughout the specification, for example at page 6 lines 20-27.

The Applicant has deleted "conventional" from claim 19 to provide for proper antecedent basis. The Applicant has replaced "and" with -- or -- in claim 19 to clarify the claim language.

The Applicant has replaced "rules" with -- rule -- in claims 21-25 and 27-31 to provide for proper antecedent basis.

The Applicant has deleted "local" from claim 23 to provide for proper antecedent basis. The Applicant has replaced "and" with -- or -- in claim 23 to clarify the claim language.

The Applicant has added "outgoing" to the preamble of claim 26 to better define the invention. The Applicant has replaced "and" with -- or -- in claim 26 to clarify the claim language. The Applicant has deleted both instances of "conventional" in claim 26 to provide for proper antecedent basis.

The Applicant has deleted "local" from claim 29 to provide for proper antecedent basis. The Applicant has replaced "and" with -- or -- in claim 29 to clarify the claim language.

No new matter is added by these amendments.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

In section 2 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-31 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 in view of Koyama.

Koyama discloses a packet communication system that selects a connection path from a packet communication unit to either a Local Area Network or a conventional telephone network, based on the kind of network of the called device. However, Koyama does not disclose or fairly suggest a device or method for routing a call from a telephone set to a telephone line or a packet network.

In contrast, the present application discloses and claims in claims 1-10 and 19-25 a device and method for routing a call from a telephone set to a telephone line or a packet network based on at least one preestablished routing rule. Such device and method allows use of a conventional telephone set to make telephone calls on a packet network (see, for example, page 2 lines 9-11). This is not possible via the disclosure of Koyama.

Regarding claims 11-18, the Examiner states that Koyama discloses a Local Area Network interface 101 and a packet network interface 33. However, reference 101 refers to a Local Area Network (see column 5 line 8) rather than an interface to a Local Area Network. As seen in Figure 2, interface 33 connects unit 30 to the Local Area Network 101.

In contrast, claims 11-18 require both "a Local Area Network interface" and "a packet network interface." Koyama does not disclose both interfaces. Because the Examiner has failed to show both interfaces, as required by the claims, the Applicant respectfully submits that the rejection of claims 11-18 in view of Koyama is improper and must be withdrawn.

Similarly to claims 11-18, claims 26-31 also require both "a Local Area Network interface" and "a packet network interface." As discussed above, Koyama does not disclose both interfaces. Because the Examiner has failed to show both interfaces, as required by the claims, the Applicant respectfully submits that the rejection of claims 26-31 in view of Koyama is improper and must be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing, the Examiner's rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102 to claims 1-31 is believed to be overcome.

Newly Added Claim

With this response, the Applicant adds claim 32. This claim is added to better claim the invention. The claim is supported by the specification (see, for example, Figure 1 and the description thereof). No new matter is added by this claim.

Additional Fees

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any insufficiency or credit any overpayment associated with this application to Deposit Account No. 19-5127 (order 20014.0002).

Conclusion:

Claims 1-32 are pending in the application. In view of the foregoing, all of the Examiner's rejections to the claims are believed to be overcome. The Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and issuance of a Notice of Allowance for all claims. Should the Examiner feel further communication would help prosecution, he is urged to call the undersigned at the telephone number provided below.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dated: October 31, 2001

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MARKED-UP COPY OF THE AMENDED CLAIMS

1. (Amended) A telephone to packet adapter for routing an outgoing call issued by a telephone set, said adapter comprising:

a telephone line interface configured to be connected to a telephone line;

a telephone interface configured to be connected to [a] the telephone set;

a [Local Area Network] packet network interface configured to be connected to a packet network;

a controller circuit interconnecting said telephone line interface, said telephone interface and said [Local Area Network] packet network interface; said controller circuit being so configured as to route said [telephone interface] outgoing call to one of said telephone line and said [Local Area Network] packet network interfaces depending on at least one preestablished routing rule.

2. (Amended) A telephone to packet adapter as recited in claim 1, wherein said packet network interface is a Local Area Network interface [is] configured to be connected to [a] said packet [Network] network via a Local Area Network.

3. (Amended) A telephone to packet adapter as recited in claim 1, wherein said packet network interface is a Local Area Network interface [is] configured to be connected to [a] said packet network via a Local Area Network packet network gateway.

4. (Amended) A telephone to packet adapter as recited in claim 1, wherein said controller circuit includes an embedded agent software controlling the routing of the [telephone interface] outgoing call.

5. (Amended) A telephone to packet adapter as recited in claim 1, wherein said at least one preestablished routing rule is such that a) said [telephone interface] outgoing call is routed to said telephone line interface when a dialled telephone number is a local call and b) said [telephone interface] outgoing call is routed to said [Local Area Network] packet network interface when the dialled telephone number is not a local call.

6. (Amended) A telephone to packet adapter as recited in claim 1, wherein said at least one preestablished routing rule is such that said [telephone interface] outgoing call is routed to said telephone line interface when no packet network address corresponding to a dialled telephone number exist.

7. (Amended) A telephone to packet adapter as recited in claim 1, wherein said at least one preestablished routing rule is such that said [telephone interface] outgoing call is routed to said telephone line interface when a dialled telephone number is an emergency number.

8. (Amended) A telephone to packet adapter as recited in claim 1, wherein said controller circuit includes a telephone number database of telephone numbers that may be reached via the packet network; said at least one preestablished routing rule is such that a) said [telephone interface] outgoing call is routed to said telephone line interface when a dialled telephone number is not present in said telephone number database and b) said [telephone interface] outgoing call is routed to said [Local Area Network] packet network interface when the dialled telephone number is listed in said telephone number database.

9. (Amended) A telephone to packet adapter as recited in claim 1, wherein said at least one preestablished routing rule is such that said [telephone interface] outgoing call is routed to said telephone line interface when said packet network is inactive.

19. (Amended) A method for routing a telephone [calls to a packet network] call issued by a telephone set via a telephone to packet adapter provided with a telephone line interface, a telephone interface, a [Local Area Network] packet network interface and a controller circuit interconnecting the telephone line, telephone and [Local Area Network] packet network interfaces; said method comprising the steps of:

connecting a telephone line to the telephone line interface;

connecting [a] the telephone set to the telephone interface;

connecting the adapter to a packet network [to the Local Area Network] via the packet network interface;

running an agent software for routing the telephone [interface] call to either the [conventional] telephone line interface [and] or the [Local Area Network] packet network interface depending on at least one preestablished routing rule.

20. (Amended) A routing method as recited in claim 19, wherein said packet network connecting step includes the substep of connecting a Local Area Network to the [Local Area Network] packet network interface[; wherein the Local Area Network is connected to a packet network].

21. (Amended) A routing method as recited in claim 19, wherein said at least one preestablished routing [rules] rule includes a local call routing rule; said local call routing rule dictates that the telephone interface is to be routed to the telephone line interface when a number dialled onto the telephone set is a local call.

22. (Amended) A routing method as recited in claim 19, wherein said at least one preestablished routing [rules] rule includes a long distance call routing rule; said long distance call routing rule dictates that the telephone interface is to be routed to the [Local Area Network] packet network interface when a number dialled onto the telephone set is a long distance call.

23. (Amended) A routing method as recited in claim 19, wherein said at least one preestablished routing [rules] rule includes a default routing rule; said [local] default routing rule dictates that the telephone interface is to be routed to the telephone line interface when either a) a number dialled onto the telephone set has no corresponding packet network address [and] or b) the packet network is inactive.

24. (Amended) A routing method as recited in claim 19, wherein said at least one preestablished routing [rules] rule includes an emergency call routing rule; said emergency call routing rule dictates that the telephone interface is to be routed to the telephone line interface when a number dialled onto the telephone set is an emergency number.

25. (Amended) A routing method as recited in claim 19, wherein said at least one preestablished routing [rules] rule includes a database determined routing rule; said database determined routing rule dictates that a) the telephone interface is routed to the [Local Area Network] packet network interface when a number dialled onto the telephone set is present in a database of the controller circuit; and b) the telephone interface is routed to the telephone line interface when a number dialled onto the telephone set is not present in the database.

26. (Amended) A method for routing outgoing telephone calls to a packet network via a telephone to packet adapter provided with a telephone line interface, a telephone interface, a Local Area Network interface, a packet network interface and a controller circuit interconnecting the telephone line, telephone, packet network and Local Area Network interfaces; said method comprising the steps of:

connecting a telephone line to the telephone line interface;

connecting a telephone set to the telephone interface;

connecting a Local Area Network to the Local Area Network interface;

connecting a packet network interface to the packet network interface;

running an agent software for routing either a) the telephone interface to one of the [conventional] telephone line interface and the packet network interface, [and] or b) the Local Area Network interface to one of the [conventional] telephone line interface and the packet network interface, depending on at least one preestablished routing rule.

27. (Amended) A routing method as recited in claim 26, wherein said at least one preestablished routing [rules] rule includes a local call routing rule; said local call routing rule dictates that one of the telephone interface and the Local Area Network interface is to be routed to the telephone line interface when a number dialled onto the telephone set is a local call.

28. (Amended) A routing method as recited in claim 26, wherein said at least one preestablished routing [rules] rule includes a long distance call routing rule; said long distance call routing rule dictates that one of the telephone interface and the Local Area Network interface is to be routed to the Local Area Network interface when a number dialled onto the telephone set is a long distance call.

29. (Amended) A routing method as recited in claim 26, wherein said at least one preestablished routing [rules] rule includes a default routing rule; said [local] default routing rule dictates that one of the telephone interface and the Local Area Network interface is to be routed to the telephone line interface when either a) a number dialled onto the telephone set has no corresponding packet network address [and] or b) the packet network is inactive.

30. (Amended) A routing method as recited in claim 26, wherein said at least one preestablished routing [rules] rule includes an emergency call routing rule; said emergency call routing rule dictates that one of the telephone interface and the Local Area Network interface is to be routed to the telephone line interface when a number dialled onto the telephone set is an emergency number.

31. (Amended) A routing method as recited in claim 26, wherein said at least one preestablished routing [rules] rule includes a database determined routing rule; said database determined routing rule dictates that a) one of the telephone interface and the Local Area Network interface is routed to the Local Area Network interface when a number dialled onto the telephone set is present in a database of the controller circuit; and b) one of the telephone interface and the Local Area Network interface is routed to the telephone line interface when a number dialled onto the telephone set is not present in the database.